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the same original as D and P^E, and that the testimony of the first hand in B cannot justly be ranked above the individual testimony of the other MSS. Therefore, the testimony of any two of the trio B, D, P^E, should outweigh that of the third. The establishment of this principle is of importance in determining the reading in such lines as Aul. 146, where B reads *fācto*, DEV¹ *facta*. Leo, impressed with the idea of the greater value to be attached to B's testimony, reads *factum*, which approaches more nearly to B's reading than *facta*; although by so doing he becomes involved in a metrical difficulty, *factū volo*. Plainly the evidence of the two MSS. D and P^E is to be accepted here against B. So read:—

MEG. Soror, móre tuo facis. EVN. Fácta volo.

V.

ON SHORT VOWELS BEFORE MUTE AND LIQUID IN PLAUTUS: CAN THEY ACT AS "BREVES BREVIANTES"?

BY J. A. PETERS.

One of the characteristic features of Plautine verse is the shortening of a long syllable by what is known as the "breves breviantes" law. By this law a syllable long either by nature or by position may be shortened under the influence of a preceding short syllable. The exact limitations of this law in Plautus have not yet been determined. For example, while a word like *domi* may be scanned as a pyrrhic in Plautus, it is doubtful whether a form like *agri*, in which the short vowel precedes a mute and a liquid, can be so treated. The MSS. present but very few instances of such shortening through a mute and a liquid. It is my purpose in this paper to show, by an examination of the apparent or probable instances of such shortening that there is slight ground for believing that Plautus allowed himself this license. So that although the first syllable of a word like *agri* was pronounced as a short syllable, the scansion *āgrī* being a license of dactylic poetry, the syllable was not so definitely short that it could play the part of a "brevis brevians."

Aul. 715: Nequeo cum animo certum investigare: obsecro vos ego mi auxilio (*P, A n. l.*).

As this line (anapaestic) stands in the MSS., the last syllable of *obsecro* must be scanned as short. But the collocation *vos ego* is suspicious; for it has been shown by Mahler, *de Pron. Personalium apud Plautum collocatione*, p. 3, that in Plautus the nominative of the personal pronoun almost invariably precedes the accusative. Cf. Am. prol. 104: "Nam ego vos novisse credo." Therefore, *óbsecro egō vos*, etc., seems to be the true form of the line, and the scansion *obsecrō* disappears.

Ba. 404: Patrem sodalis et magistrum: hinc auscultabo quam rem agant (*P, A n. l.*).

This line stands at the end of a scene written in trochaic septenarii. If the line is scanned as trochaic, the last syllable of *patrem* must be regarded as short. But it may be that the metre suddenly changes here as the actor catches sight of other persons coming upon the stage. The line will read equally well as an iambic octonarius. Such changes from trochaic to iambic metre are not uncommon in Plautus. Cf. Men. 123 ff.; Capt. III, iii, and iv. We have a close parallel to the *Bacchides* passage in Ter. Andr. 234, where at the end of a soliloquy in trochaic septenarii the speaker catches sight of another actor, and concludes the scene with two iambic octonarii. So also in Andr. 605.

Ba. 480: Manus ferat ad papillas, labra a labris nusquam auferat (*AP*).

This line is a trochaic septenarius, the first hemistich of which is defective in metre. In the second hemistich, which is usually supposed to begin with *labra*, the word *a* is shortened by the "breves breviantes" law according to the editors. By the omission of this word, which could very easily have crept into the MSS., such shortening would be avoided. The use of the ablative without a preposition with compound verbs is not uncommon in Plautus. Cf. Truc., 944, Abstine istac tu manum.¹

¹ [The line will offer no difficulty if we admit the scansion *pāpillas*.—W. M. L.]

Ba. 641 : Nam duplex hodie facinus feci, duplicibus spoliis sum affectus (*P, A n. l.*).

This line is the second of three long lines standing at the beginning of a scene before a canticum written in trochaics and cretics. The first two lines are scanned by editors as anapaestic,¹ the third as a trochaic octonarius. By this scansion the second syllable of *duplex* is shortened. It seems much better to treat all these lines as dactylic. That, of course, would require us to scan the first syllable of *duplex* as long. In the dactylic verse of Ennius we sometimes find a syllable containing a short vowel followed by a mute and a liquid treated as long. Why should not Plautus in using this metre have allowed himself the same license?

Ba. 934 : Qui misere male mulcabere quadringentis Philippis aureis (*P, A n. l.*).

In this line, an iambic octonarius, the second syllable of *quadringentis* must be scanned as short. This word is found in three other places in Plautus, viz. Ba. 974, 1183, and Rud. 1324, in each case the second syllable being treated as short. In view of this fact the early editors of Plautus spelled the word *quadringenti*. Such a spelling is found in *C*, in Ba. 1183, and is hinted at in the spelling *quadragentis* found here in *C D*. Esch., *De Plauti Correptione Secundae Syllabae Vocabulorum Polysyllaborum* (Münster, 1897), p. 115, has pointed out that the shortenings in words of this kind under the law of "breves breviantes" are the exception rather than the rule, being only resorted to through metrical necessity. The fact that the second syllable of *quadringenti* is always treated as short in Plautus shows pretty clearly that the word was spelled and pronounced in his time without the *n*. Etymologically the *n* has no place in the word, but evidently crept in by analogy with such a word as *septingenti*.

Ba. 1041 : Duae condiciones sunt : utram tu accipias vide (*P, A n. l.*).

In this line, an iambic senarius, the second syllable of *utram* must be scanned as short. This shortening, however, may be avoided by

¹ [Ritschl made them trochaic, *Nam duplēx hodiē*, etc.—W. M. L.]

placing *tu* before *utram*, no violent alteration, since the transposition of words is one of the commonest errors in MSS. The line may also be emended by omitting, with Guyet, the *tu*, which might easily have been inserted by copyists. Cf. As. 688 *ergo obsecro te [et tu] utrumque nostrum serua*, where *et tu* has crept into the Palatine MSS.; also Pers. 341, where *utrum tu* is found in P., *utrum* in A. (see below).

Ba. 1167: *Probri perlecebrae et persuastrices, quid nunc? etiam redditis nobis (P, A n. l.)*.

If we accept the MSS. reading here, we have in the word *probri* the only example in all Plautus (cf. Pseud. 544 below) of the shortening of a naturally long final vowel after a mute and a liquid in an iambic word. Hermann and Ritschl make of the first two words a compound, *probriperlecetrae*, thus avoiding a shortening which is not found elsewhere. Such long compounds are common in Plautus; cf. *damnigeruli*, Truc. 551, *turpilucricupidum*, Trin. 100. Just as this latter word represents *αἰσχροκερδής* of Plautus's Greek original, so *probriperlecebrae* may be a translation of some Greek compound.

Capt. 321: *Ne patri tametsi unicus sum, decere videatur magis (P, A n. l.)*.

In order to scan this line as it stands, the second syllable of *decere* must be treated as short. To avoid this difficulty Leo, following Mueller, reads: "Ne patri tam etsi sum unicus, decere videatur magis." This compels us to shorten the last syllable of *patri* by the "breves breviantes" law. There is so little evidence for such a shortening of a long final vowel that this emendation cannot be accepted. The difficulty plainly lies in the second half of the line. The change of *decere* to *decere* made in the large Teubner edition seems to be the best that has been suggested.

Cist. 453: *Obsecro te— Valeas. Ut sinas— Nil moror. Expurgare me (P, A n. l.)* is probably trochaic like the following passage. (With *ut sinas* in the 4th foot compare Aul. 594 *non enim* || *quo*, etc.) So scan *óbsecró te*, the usual scansion of this phrase.

Most. 131: *Eatenus abeunt a fabris unum ubi emeritumst stipendium (P, A n. l.)*.

This line seems to be defective both in sense and metre. Leo's attempt to scan the line as trochaic, treating *a fabris* as one foot, can hardly be approved. Others make it iambic like v. 132, and scan *á fabris unum úbi émeritumst stipéndium*.

Pers. 341: Utrum tu pro ancilla me habes an pro filia?

This iambic senarius appears thus in the Palatine MSS. In A., however, the *tu* is omitted, an omission which dispenses with all possibility of the shortening of the second syllable of *utrum*. The latter is, no doubt, the correct reading. The insertion of *tu* in MSS. has been spoken of above (ad Ba. 1041).

Pers. 754: Bello extincto, re bene gesta, integro exercitu et praesidiis (*P, A n. l.*).

In the small Teubner edition this line is scanned as an anapaestic tetrameter catalectic, the first syllable of *exercitu* being shortened after the mute and liquid in *integro*. This is evidently a wrong treatment of the line, as the preceding and following lines are acatalectic. The line is better treated as acatalectic, with the *o* of *integro* left in prosodiacal hiatus. In this way the *o* is shortened, not by the "breves breviautes" law, but on account of the hiatus.

Pseud. 544: Quasi in libro quom scribuntur calamo litterae (*P, A n. l.*).

Here, if the MSS. are right, the last syllable of *libro* must be shortened by the "breves breviautes" law. This line is rejected by Ussing, and bracketed by Leo. Guyet emends by placing *quom* before *in*.

St. 326^a: Quis nam obsecro has frangit foris? ubist?

Leo scans this line as anapaestic, reading at end *ubí est*. Such a hiatus before *est* finds, I believe, no support elsewhere. In the small Teubner edition the line is marked as defective in metre. Although the following line can be scanned as anapaestic, we cannot be sure that this one was written in the same metre.¹

¹ [And if it were anapaestic, the more natural scansion would surely be *óbsecró hás* with prosodiacal hiatus: *Quisnam óbsecro has frangit foris? ubist?* For the proceleusmatic *forés úbíst* we have a parallel two lines below (*gratíā fírēs*.—W. M. L.]

Trin. 652 : *Atque ego istum agrum tibi relinqui ob eam rem enixe expeto.*

In this line the second syllable of *agrum* is scanned as a short syllable by editors who follow the Palatine text, given above, *átque ego ístum agrúm tibi*, etc. The Ambrosian palimpsest, however, offers us a different reading : *Atque istum ego agrum*, etc. This reading removes all possibility of the scansion *agrúm*. Kaempf, *de Pronominum Personalium Usu et Collocatione* (Berlin, 1886), p. 22, has shown that, although the nominative of the personal pronouns normally precedes demonstratives, there are exceptions to this rule when the demonstrative is emphatic, or the metre requires the demonstrative to precede. Cf. Mil. 1159 : *Nunc hanc tibi ego impero provinciam* ; also Truc. 944 : *Abstine istac tu manum*.¹

These are all the lines I have been able to find in Plautus in which a long syllable preceded by a mute and liquid is apparently shortened by the "breves breviantes" law.² There are in Plautus about 1240 occurrences of a short vowel followed by mute and liquid preceding a long syllable. The very small number of cases found in the MSS. in which such a long syllable is shortened is in itself strong evidence that such shortening was not allowed by Plautus. We have seen, moreover, that most of the lines in question are either defective in metre or may be easily emended so as to avoid this shortening. The shortening in Ba. 404 and 641, which seems to present the greatest difficulty, may be avoided by a different metrical treatment of the lines. Thus it appears that there is little evidence for believing that Plautus allowed himself this license. In any case, an emendation that involves the shortening of a long syllable following a mute and liquid cannot be accepted.

¹ [The scansion *Átque ego ístúm agrum tibi*, etc., is also a possibility that has to be reckoned with.—W. M. L.]

² [Leo makes *impetras* the fifth foot of a line which he regards as anapaestic, Cas. 213. Goetz and Schoell make the line cretic with *impetrās*. In Cas. 887, Leo proposes dactylic scansion with *íllecebrám stuprí*, but Goetz and Schoell trochaic with *íllecebrám stuprí*. The scansion of the large Teubner edition in Trin. 286, *sácrúm profánum* (trochaic), is changed in the small edition to *sacrúm profánum* (iambic; so Leo). C. F. Mueller's treatment of Mil. 515, *Utrum expóstulare*, etc., has not been followed by editors.—W. M. L.]